



February Message to the DoD Team

Earlier this month, Congress passed the Bipartisan Budget Act, a significant step towards ensuring our Department is able to field the most lethal, capable, and resilient military in the world, now and in the future.

We have shown our nation is best served when Congress and the Department of Defense work together to achieve results. While we still need a final appropriations bill, the Congressional budget deal provides our service members and civilian employees the confidence they need to perform their duties. It also provides our allies and industry partners the necessary stability to strengthen partnerships with our Department. Meanwhile, the Department also released our FY19 budget request, which puts our National Defense Strategy into action.

Many of you have played invaluable roles in these processes. Within Legislative Affairs, CAPT Mike Vitali coordinated between Congressional leadership, appropriators, and authorizers to create the necessary alignment for passing the budget, while Lt Col D'Anne Spence led our Nuclear Posture Review rollout on Capitol Hill, facilitating a healthy dialogue between our Department and Congressional stakeholders. Comptroller's Program and Budget team provided immense support for the budget cap negotiations. In addition, Comptroller, key players from CAPE like Mr. Gray Gildner and Mr. Gordon Jaquith, and numerous others were instrumental in drafting and submitting the strategy-driven FY19 budget request. Thank you all for your tireless efforts. I urge others to look to you as examples of exceptional performance.

Speaking of working with Congress, this month also marks a major milestone in implementing the largest structural reforms in the Department since Goldwater-Nichols in the 1980s. With Congressional support, we have split AT&L into two organizations, Acquisition and Sustainment (A&S) and Research and Engineering (R&E). This change allows us to better drive performance, ensure affordability, and spur innovation across our acquisition and technology efforts. We have also put in place our Chief Management Officer, now the No. 3 leader in the Department. Much remains to be done, but we appreciate your work to support these major changes.

Moving forward, we must continue to collaborate closely with our nation's representatives on Capitol Hill as we work to implement our National Defense Strategy. Congress has demonstrated trust in us – trust that we will deliver high performance results and remain accountable to the American people as good stewards of their tax dollars. As we translate strategy into action, we must show leadership in carrying this trust forward.

One key component of this leadership is reinforcing ethical behavior across the full spectrum of our work, recognizing it as a foundation of our ability to make sound, informed decisions. I ask that you reinforce this foundation at every turn. Make ethics a natural and constant part of your conversations. Identify gray areas to prevent future missteps. If unsure of ethical boundaries, take advantage of the resources at your disposal to gain clarity. We are all accountable for our actions as individuals, but we are strongest when we work as one team to achieve results – this is no different when it comes to ethics.

As a team, you bring unmatched grit to every fight in order to protect our nation. We owe it to those we work alongside every day, as well as those we serve, to cultivate an environment where we practice good judgment and respect ethical boundaries. Thank you for your continuous efforts to make this type of environment a reality.

As always, I'm proud to serve alongside you,
-Pat